



NEWSLETTER

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF THE MILITARY



STATE ELKS ASSOCIATION DONATES FUNDS FOR FLAGS AT MEDAL OF HONOR MEMORIALS

John Lynch, State President of the South Dakota State Elks Association was in Pierre this week to present a check for \$800 to the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Department and the State Elks Association have had a great partnership in providing flags for display at South Dakota Medal of Honor Memorials throughout the state.

The State Elks Association also recently donated monies to fund the Avenue of Flags at the South Dakota Veterans Cemetery in Sioux Falls.



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MJFSVH THROWS 100TH BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR RESIDENT

Staff and residents at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home helped Margie Williams and her family celebrate her 100th birthday this week.



For 100 beautiful years, she has brought immense happiness, love, and joy to the lives of many. She has lived 100 years and has ten decades of great memories—what an amazing milestone! Happy Birthday Margie, now let the fun begin!



PARDY ASSUMES DUTIES AS ASSISTANT ADJUTANT FOR SD ARMY GUARD

Brig. Gen. Patrick Pardy assumed duties as the new assistant adjutant general of the South Dakota Army National Guard during a change of authority ceremony at Camp Rapid, Dec. 4.

Pardy, of Howard, assumed responsibilities from Brig. Gen. Michael Oster, of Rapid City, who served in the position since October 2019. Oster will serve in Pardy's previous assignment as land component commander for Joint Force Headquarters.

Pardy is now the senior advisor to the South Dakota National Guard Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Jeff Marlette, for strategic planning, strength management, troop readiness, and mobilization support of the state's nearly 3,100 Army National Guard soldiers.

"I thank Brig. Gen. Oster for the outstanding job he has done these last several years. He has taken on some big initiatives and led the force at a time that has been very challenging," Marlette said during the ceremony. "We all know what an outstanding leader Brig. Gen. Pardy is. We are handing over this role to a truly competent, capable and excellent leader, and he will do great things."

"Thank you Maj. Gen. Marlette for your trust and confidence in me and thank you Brig. Gen. Oster for all the great things you have done. You have set us up for success and we are going to continue to follow that path," Pardy said. "No one gets here without great soldiers and staff, teammates, peers, and superiors, and I feel fortunate to continue to work with such great people in this organization."

"It's been a privilege and honor to serve in this organization and in this position," Oster said. "There is no better leader that I have worked with who is more committed to excellence and taking care of soldiers than Brig. Gen. Pardy. I wish him the best, and I know he will take things to the next level and continue to support our soldiers."

Pardy also serves in a dual-position assignment as the deputy to the commanding general—Army National Guard for the U.S. Army Maneuver Support Center of Excellence at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, advising MSCoE Commander Maj. Gen. James Bonner on National Guard capabilities, training, and readiness.

Pardy has 35 years of military service, first enlisting as a combat engineer in 1986. In 1992, he received his commission as an engineer officer through the University of South Dakota ROTC program.

Throughout his career, Pardy served in a variety of command and staff positions, such as engineer platoon leader and intelligence and operations officer positions at the battalion, brigade, and state levels. His command assignments include Company B, 153rd Engineer Battalion, 153rd Engineer Battalion, and 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade. He has served on two combat deployments to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Pardy holds a Bachelor of Science degree and Juris Doctorate degree from the University of South Dakota, and a master's degree in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College. In his civilian career, Pardy serves as a circuit judge in South Dakota's Third Judicial Circuit in Madison.



SURINAME/SD NATIONAL GUARD LEADERS REINFORCE PARTNERSHIP

Senior leaders from the South Dakota National Guard visited the Republic of Suriname, South Dakota's State Partnership Program nation, Nov. 22 through 26, to reinforce the partnership between the SDNG and Suriname military while supporting their 46th year of independence at their National Day celebration.

South Dakota and Suriname, in coordination with U.S. Southern Command, established a successful security cooperation relationship in 2006 under the National Guard Bureau's State Partnership Program. Since then, numerous exchanges have taken place between the SDNG and Suriname's Defense Forces to share experiences and best practices in a variety of military training and topics.

Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Marlette, the adjutant general of the SDNG, along with Brig. Gen. Ed Vanderwolde, director of the joint staff, and Command Sgt. Maj. Patrick Couser, senior enlisted leader, began the week at the Ministry of Defense in Paramaribo.

Meeting with Suriname's Minister of Defense Krishnakoemarie Mathoera, Col. Henri van Axel Dongen, commander of the Suriname Defense Forces and the commanders of Suriname's military branches, Marlette discussed the success of the 15-year partnership and future exchanges and projects.

"I am very optimistic about what the future holds for the Suriname-South Dakota partnership," Marlette said. "We continue to find new and meaningful ways to work together to help each of our organizations learn and grow through this partnership. Although geographically very different, we share many common missions, challenges, and goals for our organizations."

This trip also included visits to the Ministry of Education, Col. Jerry Slijngard, the head of Suriname's National Coordination Center for Disaster Relief and his senior staff, as well as with senior enlisted leaders of the Surinamese militaries.

Over the past 15 years, the two organizations have conducted nearly 170 engagement activities in support of USSOUTHCOM cooperation objectives with Suriname, including countering transnational criminal and violent extremist organizations, reinforcing humanitarian assistance and disasters response capabilities, promoting military professional development, and enhancing regional access and security sector reform.

In the senior enlisted leaders meeting, Command Sgt. Maj. Couser discussed the importance of diversifying membership in the military while discussing the increase in women enlisting in the Surinamese Army.

"We encourage (diversity) to gain perspective," said Couser. "We learn how we can best help each other, how we can learn from you, and you from us. We build strength by treating everyone with dignity and trust."

SDNG senior leaders were also honored guests at Suriname's National Day Parade, celebrating the country's 1975 independence from the Netherlands, as well as a meal with Suriname's president, Chan Santokhi.



STATE VETERANS HOME UPDATE



The Christmas spirit is definitely alive and glowing at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home.

The decorations throughout the campus and the parade of lights float demonstrates that the State Veterans Home team is



keeping with the theme of "We need a little Christmas!"

Christmas truly is the most wonderful time of the year.

Special thanks to all our staff and partners for bringing Christmas joy to our residents.



MJFSVH DECEMBER EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

George Wagner, purchasing/property management officer at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home, has been named the December "Employee of the Month."

George always shows up ready to take on the tasks of the day, is always offering a helping hand where needed, and keeps a positive attitude while doing so.

"George brings with him a wealth of logistics and supervisory experience that's been a welcome attribute to the Home," said Teresa Phillipson, deputy superintendent at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home. "His knack for forecasting medical and household supplies has been uncanny. Always researching to ensure we receive the best and most appropriate resource for our veterans and the Home. George truly has been an exceptional steward of our resources."



VA Research Study for OIF/OEF/OND Veterans



Investigators: Drs. Jeffrey Simons, Raluca Simons, and Pat Ronan

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>What:</u> Study of stress and health behaviors • <u>Where:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sioux Falls VA - University of South Dakota – Vermillion • <u>You need to be:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Between the ages of 18 and 60 years old - Have been deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan • <u>The study will involve 22 visits over a period of 2 years</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>If you participate you will receive:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to assist future veterans by participating in research aimed at improving veteran health. - Compensation for your time and travel may include \$50 for completing a baseline assessment, \$50 for each of 10 in office assessments, and up to \$135/week for each of 17 self-monitoring weeks completed, depending on number of completed assessments (up to ~2500) |
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For more information please contact:

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BLACK HILLS NATIONAL CEMETERY

UNACCOMPANIED VETERANS MEMORIAL SERVICE

9:00 AM

January 3, 2022

April 4, 2022

July 11, 2022

October 3, 2022

JOIN US AS WE CONDUCT MILITARY HONORS FOR UNACCOMPANIED VETERANS
20901 Pleasant Valley Drive —Sturgis

Questions? Call (605) 347-3830

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dec 13—SDFDA Wreath Laying Ceremony—Capitol Lake Flaming Fountain—Pierre—11:00 am (CT)
Dec 18—Wreaths Across America—South Dakota Veterans Cemetery—Sioux Falls—11:00 am (CT)
Dec 24—State Offices Closed
Dec 31—State Offices Closed

2022

Jan 3—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—(20901 Pleasant Valley Dr)—Sturgis—9:00 am (MT)
Jan 10—POW/MIA Chair of Honor Dedication—State Capitol—2:00 pm (CT)
Jan 11—Governor's State of the State Address
Jan 12—SD Veterans Council Meeting—Redrossa Italian Grille—Pierre—3:00 pm (CT)
Jan 12—SD Veterans Council/SDDVA Legislative Reception—Redrossa Italian Grille—Pierre—5:30—7:30 pm (CT)
Jan 19—SDDVA "Virtual" Mini Conference
Jan 30-31—SD VFW Annual Legislative Conference—Moose Lodge (910 N. Deadwood Street)—Fort Pierre
Feb 18-20—American Legion Mid Winter Conference—Oacoma
Feb 27-Mar 3—National VFW Legislative Conference—Washington, DC
Apr 4—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—(20901 Pleasant Valley Dr)—Sturgis—9:00 am (MT)
Apr 8-10—DAV of South Dakota State Convention—Rushmore Hotel and Suites (445 Mt. Rushmore Road)—
Rapid City
Jun 9-12—State VFW Convention—Ramada Inn—Mitchell
Jun 12—Midwest Honor Flight Annual Honor Ride
Jun 16-19—State American Legion Conference—Watertown
Jul 11—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—(20901 Pleasant Valley Dr)—Sturgis—9:00 am (MT)
Jul 18-23—National Veterans Golden Age Games—Sioux Falls
Jul 31-Aug 4—Military Order of the Purple Heart National Convention—Rapid City
Aug 15-18—SDDVA Annual CTVSO Benefit School
Oct 3—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—(20901 Pleasant Valley Dr)—Sturgis—9:00 am (MT)

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